



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION OF MENTAL RETARDATION SERVICES
ANDREW JACKSON BUILDING
500 DEADERICK STREET, 15TH FLOOR
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243

MEMORANDUM

To: DMRS Service Provider Agencies

From: Stephen H. Norris
Deputy Commissioner

Re: Participant Experience Survey

Date: May 4, 2007

As you may already know, The People Talking to People Program is a statewide consumer satisfaction survey contracted out to the Arc of Tennessee through the Department of Finance and Administration, Division of Mental Retardation Services (DMRS). DMRS supports the philosophy that any systems change should be driven by consumer input. The decision to participate should rest solely with the individual served or the family member chosen to participate in the survey. This feedback will allow for system-wide quality improvement by giving consumers a voice, thus able to control important choices and decisions in their own lives.

There has been some question as to whether consumers need their legal representatives' or conservators' permission to participate in the survey. This memo is to make agencies aware that consumers have a right to express their own opinion without their legal representatives' or conservators' consent, and therefore *consumers need not have permission from their legal representative(s) or conservator(s) to participate in the survey.*

The response by consumers to their individual surveys should be made available to their individual legal representative(s) or conservator(s) upon request.

We appreciate your cooperation. If you have questions regarding this program, please contact Brenda Clark at (615) 253-6811.

SHN:bc

cc: Stephen O. Tepley, General Counsel, DMRS
Walter Rogers, Executive Director, Arc of Tennessee